Forms and Causes of Political Terrorism: What Do We Know?

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Abstract

Given the vast and uneven literature on terrorism, this paper, first, aims at a minimal definition of terrorism.

Second, five often interlinked forms of terrorism are distinguished: (1) politico-ideological terrorism; (2) ethno-nationalist terrorism; (3) religio-political terrorism; (4) international terrorism, and (5) single-issue terrorism. These types often overlap and form hybrids. “Pure” types are, nevertheless, needed for a differential analysis.

Third, basic explanatory variables suggested in the literature in diverse fields will be discussed at four levels: individual, group, the macro level of states/societies, and the international/global level.

Fourth, there is a critical assessment of theories claiming to be more general ones. A few scenarios building on these and other arguments are briefly sketched. The consequences of terrorism are mostly left out. They are the subject of another paper by Friedrich Schneider and Tilman Brück that eventually will be joined with the present one for an overall assessment of terrorism.
FORMS AND CAUSES OF POLITICAL TERRORISM: WHAT DO WE KNOW?

I. Introduction

"Money destroys the character. Especially, if you haven’t got any,” Peter Ustinov once said. Money in all its variety and connections is part of the clue to understand political terrorism, but there is much more to it. To use the analogy of a currency, we have dozens of explanations for a wide variety of phenomena, but no standard of a hard currency. There are some stylized facts to be added in a later section. Yet, many further steps of scientific discovery and explanation lie ahead, the most immediate one being solid data banks, the other being powerful and far-reaching general theories.

This survey of explanations of terrorism centers on major theories proposed for accounting for the various types and shades of terrorism. We do not aim at an encyclopedic account which is impossible given the amount of literature published. Also there is no goal of being comprehensive. We are on purpose selective, concentrating on what, in our opinion, are (a) the most prominent, (b) relevant, and (c) perhaps promising theories. Numerous lacunae of research will be spelt out in doing so.

In this survey we start with definitional issues (II), then focus on types of terrorism and their differentia specifica (III), develop a general causal model of terrorism (IV), before dealing with various theoretical explanations (V). Also a tabular overview over some major and representative findings in mostly cross-national research on terrorism is presented [unfinished], just as much as a few scenarios are sketched (VI). If anything it is our hope to clear away some underbrush on this dysmal topic. In following our task, we draw on work and theories from disciplines such as political science, sociology, social psychology, psychology, and as the base for a rational account, where suitable, economics.

We try to keep the discussion as brief as possible, concentrating on a parsimonious account rather than engaging in a detailed criticism of the literature at every corner. In quite a few instances, misjudgments and analytical weaknesses found in the literature will be addressed. Only in this limited respect the sub-title “What do we know” is to be understood. We want to concentrate on a concise and minimalist treatment of the field of terrorism.
II. Definitions of Terrorism

The definition of terrorism, perhaps more than any other topic, shows the circularity inherent in any definition. Definitions ought to be fruitful and precise. There is no inherent insight or knowledge from using definitional shortcuts. Most definitions of terrorism at some point contain the notion to spread fear. Thus, the Latin word for fear, namely terror, is substituted by a noun Germanic in origin, fear.

Definitional issues are matters of pragmatism and fruitfulness. In the non-scholarly analysis of terrorism they often become emotional items with the usual we - they situation reversely evaluated: the own guy is the freedom fighter, the enemy the terrorist and criminal (cf. the experimental minimal group theory of Tajfel 1981). Yet, even here sometimes people call self-styled freedom fighters terrorists if they do not have the support of the population that they claim to speak for, if they created more damage than good, if their presentation and personal/political life-style violates shared norms (Richardson 2007:32-3). Richardson consequently pleads for a system-overarching definition of terrorism, and for calling a terrorist a terrorist no matter where and when. Reaching widespread acceptance for such an analytical position is another question, given the cynical remark that war is the terrorism of the rich (and powerful), and terrorism the warfare of the poor (and powerless).

There are numerous lengthy definitions of terrorism (e.g., Wilkinson 2006:1-19). Bjørgo (2005b:1) speaks of more than two-hundred definitions. The core elements of the more useful definitions are: Terrorism uses (i) means of fear, violence, and coercion to intimidate mostly civilians, (ii) in order to change the behavior of political leaders to do what they otherwise would not be willing to do. This implies limitations to personal freedom on the part of others and coercion, both of which are not granted rights in liberal law-oriented societies. Given this violation of basic rights, terrorism in the end is a political strategy. It also can be a political tactic within other political conflicts (Wilkinson 2006; Laqueur 1977).

Further definitional elements like lawlessness, in our opinion, should not be included in a definition of terrorism. That terrorism is illegal is already implied by the violation of the state monopoly of violence. The U.N. definition at the Madrid International Summit of Democracy, Terrorism and Security in March 2005, is redundant in this respect.

Richardson (2007:28-30), in line with the arguments so far, defines terrorism as attacks on civilians, carried out in a violent and planned manner to achieve political goals. She mentions seven decisive criteria for terrorism, partly elaborated on here.

First, terrorism is politically motivated. Otherwise, criminal behavior is at issue. When terrorists reach for extended goals, they usually claim to have political goals. The authorities, on the other hand, usually deny this and merely speak of criminal behavior and perpetrations. This allows for a more differentiated and wider mix of response measures, such as judicial responses, violent repressive reactions, and other forms of political responses.

Second, if there is no active or threatened violence, terrorism is not at issue. (Logically, the second criterion is implied in the first and thus redundant.)
Third, the purpose of terrorism is not to beat the enemy but to distribute a message. Terrorism is a weapon of the weak and thus an indirect strategy (Fromkin 1975). For al Qaeda the message means fighting the U.S. (Western) Satan around the world, liberating the Arab territories from "Western occupation," and re-establishing the caliphate.

Fourth, the act of terror and the victims in general possess a symbolic quality. The psychological effect usually is much greater than the physical damage, as large as that may be in the case of the attacks of 9/11.

Fifth, terrorism is the perpetration of sub-state actors. States might use terrorism as proxy warfare in their foreign policy. They can be host to terrorist groups and support them. Yet, analytically one is well-advised to see terrorists as sub-state actors and not as states. Doubts frequently remain as where to draw the borderline between sub-state actors and states which often come about in disguised coalitions. If states were considered the major actors in terrorism, the whole analytical assessment of terrorism as a weapon of the weak, therefore as an indirect strategy, and finally as a state of consciousness were to collapse. Also, in general, states are not the prime terrorist actors (and cannot be in case of sub-state terrorism), irrespective of massive support from time to time (Syria, Libya, Saudi-Arabia, Pakistan, etc.).

To understand terrorism as a weapon of the weak, a systematic delineation of authority, power, coercion and violence has been worked out (Zimmermann 1983; 2008). If one draws on the definitions of authority and power proposed by Max Weber (1964), the following ordering of conceptual extension can be derived:

权威 > 权力 > 使用暴力 > 暴力

For Weber, authority is the ability to find obedience for a specific order amongst a delineated set of people. Power means the ability to do so and to enforce one’s will against resistance. Force is one of the means in doing so, and violence again is one of the forceful means.

The use of violence destroys resources. The more established the authority, the less the use of violence and vice versa. The Pope, for one, rules through obedience and without armed soldiers (excepting the now symbolic protection by the Swiss Guard). Terrorist violence as random attacks on mostly civilians is at the greatest distance from legitimate authority that protects citizens without using violence.

This points to the asymmetric character of terrorism. Terrorism is asymmetric in a least five respects:

First, it is the weapon of the weak, not of equals. Terrorism is asymmetric not only in its extremely limited resources, but also in its low costs. (The attacks on the towers of the World Trade Center did cost no more than a midsize six-digital US-$-figure.)

Second, given the great restraints on resources, terrorism must be asymmetric in strategy and tactics, concentrating the vast majority of its resources on attack. This is the tactic of painful needle-stitches. Usually the effects are much more severe than the needle-stitch or flee-bite association suggests.
Third, in timely respects such attacks can, at least in principle, be repeated at any moment, at any point. The terrorists' decisions when to strike and when to give up cause the asymmetries in time perspective.

Fourth, terrorism thus is also asymmetric in terms of location. In principle, no territories are spared the threat, contrary to classical warfare that tries to follow conventions (Geneva convention, U.N. convention of just war, etc.).

Fifth, terrorism is asymmetric in terms of legitimacy and recruitment. Activists and supporters of terrorism usually represent only a tiny minority of an overall minority. This was the case of he RAF and the Brigate Rosse emanating from the student revolt. It is even true with respect to ETA terrorism which in the late Franco years came close to a borderline case of a highly-repressed guerrilla warfare.

As indicated, there are three basic tenets of terrorism one should be aware of: first, terrorism is the weapon of the weak. Second and most important, therefore terrorism is only an indirect strategy (Fromkin 1975) that derives momentum from the over-reactions and/or under-reactions of the stronger stately opponent. Over-reaction easily contributes to the violence breeds counter-violence nexus. Under-reaction means that the basic tenet of a state, namely providing order, cannot be fulfilled, that a vacuum, a potential double state (Tilly 1978) is being created out of which the stronger battalions and institutions might emerge (the classic path in the Chinese, Vietnamese and other revolutionary overthrows).

Third, in applying terror the minds of specific people (elites, segments of the population or the population at large, foreigners and foreign powers, own terrorist adherents and shaky candidates, etc.) are to be scared so as to affect their responses and to mold them into the direction of the terrorists’ goals. These goals can be many, but the strongest mixture includes elements of anti-foreign and anti-colonial warfare, that is nationalism. In such a constellation, common ethnic and cultural traits become a mobilizing resource against foreign intruders and/or their (perceived) national collaborators. Thus, the three basic tenets of terrorism are deductively linked: Since terrorism is a weapon of the weak who are from away from holding authority, they are forced to follow an indirect strategy which rests on creating fearful states of minds.

There are still two more definitional elements in Richardson’s list both of which can be quickly covered:

Sixth, the victims of terrorism and the audience to be addressed, in general, are not identical. This criterion is a logical consequence of her criteria three and four. Victims are a means of influencing a wider audience, most likely a government. Victims are either randomly chosen so as to spread maximum fear amongst the population at large, or they are representative for a larger group. In both instances, the concrete victims are replaceable, depending, of course, on the size of the group. Terrorism thus differs from political assassinations that focus on a particular person.

Seventh, and the most important criterion for Richardson, is the focus on civilians. Although there are "collateral damages" in many forms of violent conflict and response, terrorists have developed and cultivated excess strategies of violence as a political tactic. Schmid thus has called an act of terrorism the "peacetime equivalent of a war crime."
Political terrorism just as much as successful guerrilla warfare requires careful selection of targets. The classical slogan of Emile Henry: "There are no innocents," commenting on the effect of throwing a terrorist bomb into a café in Paris in 1894, could easily be backfiring in conflict forms such as guerrilla fighting. It can also do so in terrorist acts if the provision of public goods and the acquisition of wider legitimacy are at stake.

Summarizing the preceding discussion we arrive at the following extended definition of political terrorism: Terrorism is a violent political tactic of sub-state groups to spread fear through (symbolic) attacks on innocent civilians and to distribute a message to a wider audience as to change policies and polities. Or for short, terrorism denotes fearful and violent attacks on civilians to change policies and polities.

III. Typologies of Terrorism

We leave out here terrorism between tribal or ethnic groups and religious ones that occurs below the state-level. Here the state and its institutions are often not directly attacked. Such events reoccur on a massive scale in civil wars (Kalyvas) and cause many more victims than sub-state anti-statist terrorism.

Following Schmid (Schmid/Jongman 1998), Post (2005:54) distinguishes political terrorism from criminal terrorism and pathological terrorism. Political terrorism is subdivided into sub-state terrorism, state-supported terrorism and regime or state terrorism. Sub-state terrorism is divided into five subcategories: social-revolutionary (left), right-wing terrorism, nationalist-separatist terrorism, religious extremist terrorism (distinguishing between religious fundamentalist terrorism and new-religious terrorism), and single-issue terrorism.

Schmid (Schmid/Jongman 1998) offers four types of political terrorism at the second level labeling them insurgent (instead of sub-state) terrorism, vigilante terrorism and then adding the two state-related forms of terrorism. Vigilante terrorism could be considered as a pre-stage of right-wing and racist terrorism and thus be dropped at the second level. Yet, one has to add international terrorism at this level. International terrorism implies targets that lie in a different country or "belong" to a country different from the nationality of the terrorist" (Zimmermann 1983:346), in contrast to transnational terrorism, "stressing the links between various terrorist groups in different countries" (ibid.).

Internationalism, dramatically complicates these three basic theoretical insights from the preceding section. Under global conditions, any number of people from any country under any circumstances can be instrumentalized in their role as hostages, victims and role models to scare off others and the like. The element of internationalism multiplies the basic number of conflicts in that international involvement automatically implies further conflict lines with the nations affected, easily creates lines of international division and free riding and thus underlines the absence of an international monopoly of power. Such an international monopoly of power does not rest with the UN, unless backed by the West and the Security Council and not vetoed by other states. Also the U.S. as the only remaining super-power as of
now has only a monopoly of power in the air (and on sea) in vast regions of the world, but definitely not on the ground much beyond its own territory.

These modifications make our own classification (Figure 1) more reductionist.

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**Figure 1: A Typology of Terrorism**

Social-revolutionary terrorism of the left (there is also a variant of this type on the right) and right-wing terrorism are treated as sub-cases of ideological terrorism. We also avoid the pitfalls in the subdivisions of religious terrorism that Post runs into.

International terrorism is much more difficult to classify than the other forms. By definition, it implies elements of the other forms, namely nationalism and ideological or religious fervour. Normally, international terrorism is a genuine hybrid. Other instances of hybrids are less frequent, though numerous examples could be given (e.g., the Marxist-oriented political program of the separatist ETA or the socialist-driven liberation army of the Tamil Tigers and the Kurdish Liberation Army under Öcalan).

Richardson (2007: 38) distinguishes terrorist groups along two criteria, whether they pursue limited or radical goals, and whether they have close ties to the population or are isolated. While considering these two basic criteria in her classification, she unfortunately puts too many mostly Islamist groups in the same box of radical goals and isolation from the population. At the same time, she lists no groups with radical goals and, nevertheless, close ties to the population. Obviously, her two factors are insufficient, as will be specified in our causal model below.

In general, the more radical the goals, the more distant are the ties to the population. Fully revolutionary circumstances provide one exception where radical goals may promise to be the only stabilizing factor to large segments of the population. One is
reminded of the success story of the Bolsheviks in Russia, which – through many coercive means – succeeded in selling their radical goals with a very popular slogan: "peace and bread." In general, however, the closer the ties to the population, the more established and legitimate channels of influence will be used. This implies that the goals of terrorist groups are more modest in such circumstances.

In Table 1 five forms of sub-state political terrorism are listed, with only five distinguishing criteria included. The five criteria can be boiled down to even fewer crucially differentiating ones. Not all of the cells in this table will be commented on here. Also, for reasons of readability, the information provided is minimal.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Goals Negotiable or Not (1–3)</th>
<th>Size of Potential Coalition (1–3)</th>
<th>Strategy/Tactics</th>
<th>Public Goods Provision</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Ideological Groups</td>
<td>(a) Neo-communist state and economic system (b) Fascist authoritarian state</td>
<td>1: no</td>
<td>1: limited</td>
<td>shooting attacks, hostage-taking, hijacking, bombing and threat of such actions</td>
<td>(a) no: contrary, killing workers and other clientele members (b) no</td>
<td>(a) RAF, Red Brigades; 3rd World examples (b) right-wing extremists/Fascist branches; terrorism against foreigners</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>(a) National independence (with or without socialist economy) (b) Separatism</td>
<td>2-3: yes, with careful accommodative handling</td>
<td>3: broadest common denominator</td>
<td>(a) attacks in 1 or 2 states mostly, keeping political talks and channels open (b) similar, but more clandestine behavior</td>
<td>yes; protection, infrastructure creating communal values (“we-feeling”) “irrespective” of religious base</td>
<td>(a) ETA, IRA (b) Québec Liberation Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Ethno-nationalist Groups</td>
<td>(a) Islamic Republic of Palestine, dismantling Israel (b) Jewish Settlement groups in Palestine (c) Christian terrorist groups</td>
<td>1: no</td>
<td>2: limited to religious adherents</td>
<td>vicious attacks fighting over exclusive “Holy Land”</td>
<td>yes, but only for the religious true believer</td>
<td>(a) Hamas (b) Baruch Goldstein group (c) Christian groups, e.g., Army of God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Religio-political Groups</td>
<td>(a) Pan-Islamist caliphate, changing the international system (b) Marxist revolutionary cells changing the international system</td>
<td>1: no</td>
<td>2-3: (a) network of networks in more than 60 countries (b) no direct international network</td>
<td>(a) mass killings everywhere (b) shooting attacks, hostage-taking, hijacking, bombing and threat of such actions</td>
<td>no, in the first stage: anarchy and disturbance of international division of labor</td>
<td>(a) Al Qaeda (b) 19th century, 1970s onwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. International Groups</td>
<td>(a) animal welfare (b) ecology (c) human life</td>
<td>1-2: some handling with the less fanatics</td>
<td>1: limited</td>
<td>limited attacks at symbolic institutions or individuals</td>
<td>yes, but only for the true believer</td>
<td>(a) Animal Liberation Front (ALF) (b) Ecological terrorist groups © Anti-abortion terrorism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Single-Issue Groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>
The five groups are: ideological groups where we allow for both leftwing-extremist and right-wing extremist ones. In case of socialist-left groups, their goals are a (neo)-communist state and socialist economic system, as well as a change of the international economic and political system. In the developed countries most of these groups had collapsed in the late 1980s and were given their final death blow with the collapse of communism. Also their spreading in Third World countries is declining, after these groups did loose their two main sponsors, Moscow and, in part, Bejing. Nevertheless, given social, economic and political inequality in many of those countries, a revival of such groups can be predicted, perhaps somewhat being tamed by the unrestricted demands of a global economic market and its calls for economic efficiency.

Usually the goals of such groups are unnegotiable which limits the size of their potential coalition. This in turn nourishes more radical and bloody tactics, and, in the end, leads to little or no provision of public goods. Resilience of such groups in Third World countries will be large, but the likelihood of success will be nearly as small as it was with the more narrow communist-ideological terrorist groups in the 1970s mainly in Europe.

Ethno-nationalist groups are and will be the most persistent challengers. Ethnic separatism as a subform belongs here. Most important perhaps, there is a structural advantage on the part of ethno-cultural gangs or groups that is normally not present in homogeneous ethno-cultural settings, that of association with one’s own kin: these groups provide protection and often other public goods such as schooling and social welfare. The Hamas is a most dramatic case here.

Whether these groups arise as hybrids also calling for socialism in the economy (ETA) or not (Québec Liberation Front) is of minor importance. What matters more, is that, in principle, their goals are negotiable, if handled with care on both sides. This realism, in comparison to the first type of terror groups, also makes for the greatest common denominator in support and thus for potentially the largest coalition. After all, anthropologically and genetically kinship is an even more binding institution than religion. Further, nationalism might preclude or override religious divisions, including discriminating rules against women. Religion has the advantage of linking the private sphere of grievances and beliefs with the public one (Richardson 2007:104) and thus create further drive to political dissatisfaction. Secularism, on the other hand, may overcome or amalgate religious dissent. None of these strong forces is permanently he stronger one. There is a tradeoff between the two. Yet, we know little about circumstances and critical junctures here.

Bjørø (2005b:9) also adds an important qualification as to types of nationalism involved: "Exclusionary ethnic nationalists are more likely to justify separatist terrorism than moderate and inclusive civic nationalisms."

The more successful terrorist groups here work in cooperation with other political challengers. Thus, political channels are kept open. Also in terms of public goods, these groups have the best record: first, they provide safety for their kin; second comes infrastructure to sustain (guerrilla) fighting and also to set up a pre-model of a state; third, as stated, the binding power of a nationalist ideology is second to none, providing a strong feeling of "we" and "them." A nationalist ideology can also capture secular elements in a population, and does even more so, if a religious bound is
lacking. Nationalism just as much as a socialist or racist ideology easily can become a substitute to religion.

The third group, the religio-political groups, on religious grounds makes exclusive claims for specific territory, with no, or hardly any, coexistence for other religions. Jewish fanatic religious terror groups like the Goldstein group and the Islamist counterparts of Hamas provide examples. These goals are strictly unnegotiable, which limits the size of the potential coalition and the public goods provision to the true believers. Christian equivalents can be listed in the past and could reoccur at any time, given the challenge through Muslim immigration in Europe, Russia, and elsewhere.

The fourth group, international terrorist groups, comprises the prevalent and most destructive ones in the last one and a half decade, most prominently adherents of the loose-network structure of al Qaida. Their goal of establishing a pan-Islamist caliphate, of driving out not only Americans and other Westerners from the Middle and Near East, but also in the end converting them into Muslims, is again unnegotiable. The preferred tactic is mass killings of civilians and mass disturbances of public life (e.g., the attacks in Madrid in 2004 and in London in 2005). They provide no public goods at all in the present ("first") stage, given the international anarchy and the disturbance of the international division of labor they want to bring about. The public good they create for their adherents is a common currency of simplifying the world, of dividing it into “right” and “wrong” people, and promising the right ones the blessings of Allah. Bin Laden rejects any economic explanations for the Jihadist terrorism out of poverty and related arguments. Islamist radicalism and holy warfare for him is “a gift of Allah” (Richardson 2007:93).

Marxist revolutionary cells, challenging the international system both in the 19th century and from the 1970ties on, again are other worldly ideological examples of international terrorist groups that, however, have lost their momentum. There may be a substitution process going on: what religion captures cannot be captured otherwise, and vice-versa if there are strong external powers to bolster a Marxist view of the world. This substitution process on the part of the rank and file is probably much less open in case of ethno-nationalist terrorist groups.

The single-issue terrorist groups comprise the final, fifth, category. Their goals are not reconcilable with the wider publics in most Western societies. Such goals comprise fundamental protection of animal welfare; of the ecology; or, in case of anti-abortion groups, of human life, or of reaching divine status, as with doomsday sects such as the Japanese Aum Shinrikyo. Reconciliation is possible only with the less committed adherents of such groups. Their potential coalition-size is bound, given the limited focus of single-issue groups.

This first coverage of five different groups has, on purpose, left out several other characteristics: some of the causes or root factors will be discussed after we have presented a general causal model of political terrorism. To some extent, the causes which often overlap can be reinferred from the goals of the respective terrorist groups. Organizational issues will also be tackled later (without going into questions of financing, cf. Schneider/Brück 2007).

As to recruitment three important summary observations apply: first, Post (2005:57) makes the important distinction whether rebels pursue the work of their parents as in
ethno-nationalist groups or are rebelling against them, as the RAF, e.g., did. Second, the recruitment of leaders from the midde to higher echelons of society vis-à-vis the rank and file from the lower strata is a recurrent observation. Third, apart from that, Laqueur's summary more than a generation ago is still to the point: Terrorism comes in many guises, is influenced by many factors, and cannot be traced to a single cause or constellation of causes. Terrorism takes place in a variety of ways and in quite different political systems. It has been used by nationalist, leftist, rightist, religious, and other groups and movements. Also different types of personalities have engaged in acts of terrorism. Only the totalitarian states of the twentieth century (and some democracies) have been largely free from acts of terrorism (but not from state terrorism in the former case (Zimmermann 1983:346 drawing on Laqueur 1977).

These types of terrorism do not remain nicely contained in the typological boxes reserved for them. One has to reckon with common and specific causes in many of those cases. One could also argue for treating anti-colonial terrorism and ethno-cultural terrorism as separate types or for including religious terrorism under ethno-cultural terrorism which it is in a sense. Nevertheless, in delineating the thrust and the causes of these different types of terrorism we hope to be as parsimonious as possible. Later on organizational and strategic arguments derive from this tri-partition and from other factors. First, however, a look at explanations for the different forms of political terrorism is at order.

Starting with the important element of anti-colonialism, imagine for a moment a much better life under colonial or foreign rule than otherwise achievable. One still would have to reckon with parts of the elites and the population to go for their own political and cultural destination (cf. the powerful experiments of Tajfel, 1981, on minimal group theory). Otherwise even long-enduring world orders like the Roman Empire and the British Empire which granted vast cultural autonomy to their satrapies (Hechter 2000) would have survived (even) longer. Yet, there is a tradeoff in that positive economic circumstances can buy off large portions of grievances. One usually finds the distinction that economic conflicts are easier to solve because money is a divisable good that can be exchanged whereas ethno-cultural conflicts do not command this option. Here conflicts are perceived to be indivisible since demands by cultural and ethnic groups are perceived as the denial of one’s own standards. This is, however, not necessarily a zero-sum conflict structure, an all-or-nothing phenomenon. Otherwise the massive immigration of members from different cultures into Western countries would have been impossible and ended in utterly failure.

Thus, economic affluence can buy off some of those ethno-cultural tensions (cf. Frey 2004). It is only with the absolute fanactics that such routes are foreclosed, and those fanatics gain a stronger hold usually in times of economic deprivation.

The question arises whether anti-colonial nationalist, political extremist and social-ideologist elements as well as religious fanaticism can be treated as substitute mechanisms to refill the shell once other necessary driving and support elements are lacking. The answer is probably “yes,” though a less fragmented ideological "super-structure" (broadly defined) makes for few temptations to break away. It all depends on the degree of ideological homogeneity that can be provided. Colonialism does this best with its immediate everyday experience that there are people, differently looking, talking, and behaving who occupy one's own territory and challenge one's culture, beliefs, and lifestyle.
Religious indoctrination provides assurance against other challenges but requires more, the true believer, the fanatic, and much more effort in teaching, in particular since heretics are to be controlled who could convey the weaknesses of religious indoctrination and “truth.” You will hardly find definitional insecurities where anti-colonial nationalism is at issue. Only the comprador bourgeoisie and bureaucracy (that is, however, widespread) is likely to resist a broad anti-foreign anti-colonial coalition.

Thus, one could argue that in as much as mobilization forces can be increased through religious beliefs, political ideologies and anti-colonial national ideas, the more so, on the other hand, one has to reckon with coordination problems. Also there is often rivalry between these three forms of extremism: in particular if atheism in the form of leftist political radicalism (socialism, communism) or fascism with its own (“negative”) “gods” comes into play.

If one were to order the three types of terrorism (excepting international terrorism for the moment) as to the strength of the main underlying factors, the following brief interim summary were to suggest itself:

1. Anti-colonialism represents the broadest ideological and population-wise denominator (cf. Huntington 1968).

2. Religious terrorism can, in its exclusiveness that frequently comes with it, fulfill the same function (though this exclusiveness is not necessarily the case, not even under monotheism, cf. Peters 2004). The difference is that anti-colonialism is always concrete: there is someone ruling in your state, city and even house whom you do not want to be there, and be it only a deputy communist functionary (getting his support from Moscow in the end), as was the case largely in Eastern Europe. Soviet communists were overtaken by the wisdom of an old Russian proverb: "No sword is sharper than that used for freedom’s cause." The irony on the part of East Europeans consisted, of course, it not using the sword in their fight for freedom from foreigners.

All these forms can be super-imposed on each other then adding further momentum to the protest already expressed through terrorism. Terrorism is not just about producing terror; in its more planned and refined forms it also carries a message, too. Where this is not the case, senseless nihilist terrorism is taking place. The number of such terrorist events should not lead one to assume it to be the dominant form and type of terrorist activity.

The goals of terrorism can be of great variety, but the strongest mixture includes elements of anti-foreign and anti-colonial warfare, that is nationalism. In such a constellation, common ethnic and cultural traits become a mobilizing resource against foreign intruders and/or their (perceived) national collaborators.

If nationalism and anti-colonialism is further driven by religious fanaticism, you have the worst of all conflict structures: two zero-sum games with double intensity and no way of compromise, unless stabilization somehow comes from within and/or without. This basically means, creating a stable and legitimate state, and further reducing the element of colonialism. Both are extremely difficult to achieve in multi-ethnic and multi-religious conflict-ridden societies. Here the element of external or internal (cf. Hechter 1975) "colonialism" always looms large as an easy scapegoat.
(3) Political-ideological terrorism shares with anti-colonial terrorism and religious terrorism the rigorous we (positively evaluated) and they (negatively evaluated) hiatus. That divisive line is the same as in any sectarian movement where the ideology has to be monopolized, just as much as the instruments of enforcement in case of sanctions needed against members. Everyday behavior is controlled through other higher-ranking sect members. The routes of the mind and the territory ordinary members are allowed to travel constantly must be supervised. In short, sectarian life means total roles (with no outside incentives and control), a total control of territory and minds.

This said, the parallels between these three types of terrorist movements immediately emerge. Letting in the outside is dangerous for both, leadership in that they lose control, and members in that they drift away. Yet, in order to survive as a group and as leaders there is the constant challenge of adaptation to a new environment, even if the goal were only to survive without imposing oneself as a group on others. Thus, the usual setting is a flourishing set of coalitions with other groups, unless geographical isolation allows for totally inward looking behavior and procedures.

Zimmermann (2004) has suggested a typology of conflict forms along three fundamental criteria: (a) the state monopoly of violence, (b) the challenge of national borders, and (c) the ideological challenge of the prevailing systemic order. One could add a fourth dimension here, the challenge of the international system, as expressed in terrorism of the fourth type of groups. This lack of international agreement in the end is a consequence of the security dilemma in international politics. There is no credible and acceptable international monopoly of power. The resulting security dilemma often reinforces what is already prevalent within many multi-ethnic societies, namely the security dilemma between different ethno-cultural groups and the state. Again one finds no trust in an overarching power, be it nationally or internationally.

Focusing on these three to four dimensions for the moment, the border question remains pertinent (irredenta nationalism) as a differentium specificum, and whether there is a challenge to the international system on the part of a terrorist group (al Qaeda, Marxist-Leninist etc.). Note that all terrorist activities of whatever sort are anti-systemic in the sense of challenging and breaking the state monopoly of violence and demanding a new form of government, not just a replacement of personal. Thus, the violation of the state monopoly of violence is another criterion that, for lack of specificity, we have not included in our minimal list of criteria in Table 1.

Further, only limited urban or rural terrorism provides cases where neither the borders nor the international system, nor the state-ideology is challenged (there are some variants of this in the 1970s).

There are three scale factors increasing the sets of underlying problems: (1) the presence of irredenta when distinct ethnic, cultural or religious groups are divided by borders (Kurds, Irish Catholics, Basques, Armenians, etc.). (2) The existence of a rich, often unevenly informed and highly-committed diaspora (Jews, Arabs, Irish, etc.). (3) The engagement in an external war, be it as attacker or being attacked. Here the decisive factor is the relative maintenance of the state monopoly of violence. In those circumstances even an increase of state authority might result. Where state authority slides away chances for all variants of terrorism, in particular ideologically and ethnically driven ones, are dramatically increasing.
Going thus back to the more parsimonious (because more distinguishing) criteria in Table 1, there is a clear causal ordering of the typological criteria. The key factor is whether the goals of terrorists are negotiable. If so, that would make, ceteris paribus, for a larger recruitment, and vice versa. Negotiable goals and a larger recruitment have a positive impact on the size of the potential coalition. This in turn, following selectorate theory (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003), should enlarge the probability of providing public goods.

Whether the provision of public goods such as and above all a (relative) monopoly of violence will stop terrorist violence depends, of course, on the response of the power-holders and their credibility. Accomodative developments in Northern Ireland could be interpreted in this sense (see Wilkinson 2006:70, 95, on the lastly positive role of the British army). The intensified struggle between the Hamas branches and Fatah in the Gaza strip, Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Israeli army testify to significant disturbance of the capacity to deliver public goods. The settlement process with the ANC in South Africa again would be a case in favour of such a causal chain.

In Figure 2 these variables have been interconnected summarizing the discussion up to this point.

Two dimensions are crucial in understanding the differential analysis in Table 1 and Figure 2. One is the clear link between negotiability of goals and the size of the challengers' coalition. Their repertoire of contention (Tilly 1978) vastly increases as the size of adherents grows. The second dimension deals with the negotiability of goals and the provision of public goods.

Table 2 shows the four possibilities here and reiterates two key dimensions of our analysis so far.
Thus far we have mostly dealt with different forms of terrorism and major criteria differentiating between them. The next step is developing a general causal model to account for political terrorism. As could be expected after the discussion so far, such a general model will not do full justice to the specific causal factors to be included in causal models of distinctive forms of political terrorism.

**Table 2: Correctible Goals and Coalition Size**

Thus far we have mostly dealt with different forms of terrorism and major criteria differentiating between them. The next step is developing a general causal model to account for political terrorism. As could be expected after the discussion so far, such a general model will not do full justice to the specific causal factors to be included in causal models of distinctive forms of political terrorism.

IV. Towards a Causal Model of Political Terrorism

Richardson (2006) mentions three explanatory variables for political terrorism: (1) an alienated individual, (2) a supportive community, and (3) a legitimizing ideology. Figure 3 shows her "explanation."
This causal scheme is no adequate summary of the many insights in Richardson’s book. The causal model she thus proposes falls short by a number of means. There are no interlinkages specified between “alienated individual,” “supportive community,” and “legitimizing ideology.” If the individual is alienated, this would imply, given this model, alienation from a wider context, maybe the regional government, the national government, or international power brokers. Who provides this ideology, does it come from the outside or from the very same supportive context? Both variants exist. While not wrong, this model is extremely underspecified. Also it remains unclear what is meant by context, since terrorism frequently occurs in the absence of communal support.

A more elaborate causal model has to address four different levels of analysis (as Richardson does in her book), to apply the appropriate linkages and give theoretical justification for the formal and substantial links suggested:
Figure 4 captures those four-levels aspects in a minimal way, without yet providing substantial theories for the broadly-labeled boxes. Following common sense in (almost) any social science analysis these days, these four levels of explanation must be distinguished: level 1, the individual level, is that of the actors which can get together in groups and organizations (level 2) to plan and carry out specific activities. The only immediately observable behavioral level is and remains level 1. Everything going beyond is victim to inferential analysis, increasing the data and observational problems one has to live with in research on terrorism (small random numbers, insufficient knowledge about actors, circumstances, and organizations, lack of control groups, etc.).

Level 3 deals with the first macro level, that of the nation-state or more generally, the societal level, to be followed by level 4, the international and the global level. Needless to say, one could include feedback effects at any level with any plausibility. Yet, clarity would be sacrificed. We have added only one link, that from states to the global level (to indicate feedback effects at least). Further, such a model makes clear that changes caused by actors originally can only occur at the individual level with some individuals, of course, being placed at different levels of authority. The model follows the by now standard multi-level social science model of McClelland and Coleman in linking macro, meso and micro levels. Macro changes as such could never be explained by macro characteristics. That would leave out actors. On the other hand, a pure look at individual behavior without considering the structural constraints and incentives would be equally falling short.

Having said this, a brief look at some possible linkages is at order before a fuller set of explanations is offered, for partly documentary reasons. Global changes affect states, sub-states organizations, and individuals alike. Their impact becomes more
salient in times of crises when masses or specific groups are confronted with serious challenges and (temporary) deprivations.

Here we have employed the four dominant streams for social movement theorizing: The rational choice perspective, which provides a general framework stressing preferences, incentives and constraints, is embedded in resource mobilization theorizing (or reversely so). Social movement theories focus on these four theoretical blocks: relative deprivation, resources, framing, and the political opportunity structure. In terms of substance such a view goes beyond the mere formal apparatus of economic approaches to terrorism. There is more to it in making such a model more explicit on a four-level base:

A model of this type provides the framework for assessing (1) individual perpetrators, their beliefs and justifications; (2) group resources and the organizational forms of groups; and (3) the macro environment of provincial and state structural development affecting (1) and (2), just as much as (1) and (2) are reactions to this. Level 4, globalization, comes in with the most recent set of factors, though the anti-Vietnam protests and terrorist factions fighting against U.S. and capitalist world dominance were an earlier example. Frequently, globalization provides further nourishment to national structural grievances such as economic dislocation, inequality, and institutional inadequacies. Globalization affects the organizational activities of terrorist groups having national and more so international goals and preparing likewise attacks.

A model of this type captures the combination of factors producing discontent at several levels: local, regional, national, and global. This discontent frequently is a complex amalgam of direct and intermediate (perceived) causes. Intensification of the challenge and response can use similar avenues in a globalized world: means of transportation for goods (including weapons), persons, and ideas, all three of which are raised to another scale through the effects of the media. Margaret Thatcher called the media the “oxygen of terrorism.” Nowadays the internet provides much of this influx, apart from television, the mass press, and pamphlets.

Second, such a “bathtub” model allows the tracing of changes at the various levels. The two lower levels of, broadly speaking, action-related explanations are tied to changes in structural features and sequences of events. While providing a plausible scheme of accounting, such a model, nevertheless, in itself falls short on rigid specification requirements, not to speak of the precision of econometric studies or game-theoretical solutions. In research on terrorism such studies usually focus on limited factors such as the ecological distribution of events, recruitment patterns, economic effects of terrorism in particular (Enders and Sandler 2006, Schneider and Brück 2007), or on assessing the efficacy of state responses.

Third, such a theoretical scheme allows tracing the changes in organizational structures, in recruitment policies and government reactions, and the subsequent interactions, including the eventual impact on the levels 3 and 4. There is no direct link on levels 3 and 4 from one point in time (t) to another (t1) without bringing in human actors (level 1, in combination with level 2).

Thus, fourth, reification of macro-assessments are hopefully avoided in such an approach.
The mediating role of organizational resources in Figure 4 deserves further notion, also with respect to overcoming the problem of free-riding in collective action. Part of that is done through tight organizational scrutiny, pressure and conformism, part of it follows from ideological impregnation raising the costs for alternative engagements.

**Terrorist Organizations, Strategies, and Tactics: Some Elements of a Differential Diagnosis**

There are strengths and weaknesses in a sectarian form of organization: the strength lies in the perfect mobilization of the directly available resources, the weakness in leaving out external better-suited resources. (The parallel to inward-looking economic modernization vs. opening up to the knowledge and division of labor available on the world-market is a clear macro-level parallel here.)

Some insight into terrorist group behavior can be gathered not only from comparing it to sectarian behavior, but also to social movements and political parties bidding for power. Social movements usually flourish in social movement sectors, i.e., they have competitors. They must win over rivals or join forces and win a broader public in promising the right combination of public and private goods (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). Since social movements usually are focused around a single issue, they achieve fast mobilization, but also face high costs of demobilization, since such success cannot be maintained for long.

Their success depends, first, on an important, yet unaddressed issue that is, second, embedded in a social milieu and, third, persists for long. It such a situation there are often strong parallels to the complaints and circumstances of ethno-cultural groups. Once a new group has become a monopolist in that domain, it can open up its way to a political party and to eventual coalition formation with other groups. The German Green Party with the original two issues of peace and ecology provides a master case here, but also shows the perils of an aging party and new challenges emerging with new coalition partners and rivals.

Does the same type of analysis hold for terrorist groups? The answer is “no”, since there are important differences: terrorist groups operate in small numbers, in a clandestine fashion. They have to single out objects and usually can not command entire milieus, unless they have less violent partners in the form of political parties (Sinn Fein, Herri Batasuna etc.). Further, through the use of violence, they run the risk of alienating addressees as well as bystanders and being wiped out through repressive counter-reactions.

Thus, we are turned back to our earlier analysis drawing on Fromkin (1975): if the state does not err in its behavior, not too much under-reaction and not all over-reaction, the cards for terrorists are weak. Wilkinson (2006) calls most of the terrorist activities a failure, excepting only those with a nationalist anti-foreign anti-colonial background under conditions where the colonial power is not willing to fight, i.e., lack of legitimacy and consequently of sufficient moral and material support. Terrorists always can create disturbances and decide about the first strike in a sequence of events, but they will not win. The, despite many contrary observations, highly professional patrolling of the British troops in Northern Ireland clearly demonstrates this pattern.
Also as with social movement analysis, many of these phenomena occur in cycles once other means of achieving influence have vanished or failed. There is always a bidding for leadership amongst newly-arising terrorist groups. Terrorist leaders, when starting to challenge a vast majority with a much larger repressive apparatus, must command over entrepreneurial spirit and organizational skills to a remarkable degree before finally coming to power. Stamina and charisma are the most important features, as demonstrated by Mao over thirty years and Castro over half a decade before winning over their opponents. Terrorists live by the errors of omission and commission on the part of their adversaries. As opportunities open up from time to time, a terrorist has simply to stay in the field and re-organize his or her group. Yet, the history of failures is much larger than that of successes, contrasting here, for one, Guevera in Bolivia with Castro himself.

Once terrorist sectarian groups have broadened their territorial and intellectual grip they have two options: one is repeating the experience at the higher (state or province) level and setting up a totalitarian state. The other is, driving away from their radical stance and opening up to the political middle which in the end means containing and finally giving up violence as the primary means of achieving political goals. The more public and private goods at the same time have to be provided by successful governments, the more the cost-ineffectiveness of violence becomes obvious. Legitimacy is the over-arching issue then.

Legitimacy of rules and authority comes, first and in declining order of importance, from establishing social order (Hobbes), second, from economic success (Easton 1975, specific support), and, third, from the beliefs in common values (democratic, religious or whatever). Notwithstanding much rhetoric, we believe these things to be almost universal constants. Measuring them and their effects appropriately is, however, much more difficult, especially under totalitarian and authoritarian rule. Basically, however, all three dimensions are important (Zimmermann 2006a).

Thus, the success of terrorist groups and leadership depends on two critical junctures: one is the insight and experience that other groups command important resources that could only be "overcome" in joining them in a coalition or in modifying one's own goals. The other is related, and refers to the not infrequent experience that it pays tremendously if terrorist leaders, once admitted to the political process, refrain from terrorism and build larger, more civil political and societal coalitions. Nearly every successful anti-colonial lead figure, with the notable non-violent example of Gandhi, has a story to tell here, from Mao via Begin to the partly-failed strategy of Öcalan.

There are two ways of approaching the analysis of terrorism, and both are related and must be taken together. The first is looking into the causes and correlates of terrorism. This seems to be the dominant stream in the literature. The other aspect is looking at the success or short-, mid- and long-term failure of terrorist groups. Here often important differentia specifica emerge that tend to be overlooked when focusing only on the first type of work.

In the end, more can be learned from the second one, if one has to choose between the two approaches. The second approach allows a differential analysis with other groups bidding for power and their strategies of success and failure, including other terrorist groups. For the first dependent variable, the emergence of a terrorist challenge, one often lacks the necessary data on the composition, trajectory and real goals of such groups. In the second phase, that of competing with others for political
power we have often more information at hand that is, however, not necessarily more easily digested in causal terms of causal analysis.

Focusing on the second strategy, there are four analytical possibilities summarized in a fourfold table of circumstances and success or failure conditions.

Table 3: Differential Terrorist Options: A Heuristic Typology

As usual the two inconsistent cases are the most interesting ones. If terrorist groups have made no grave mistakes in mobilizing their own resources and if the political opportunity structure is favorable (case 1, e.g., ANC in South Africa), one should expect a strong career pattern of such a group (more below). If both factors are negative (case 4), the case is finished and the group either eventually dissolves, as did the Brigate Rosse and the RAF and perhaps even might do the PKK (though ethno-cultural terrorism with its greater vigour is involved here), or it is fully annihilated as was the case, e.g., with Guevara’s terrorist group in Bolivia.

The "stalemate" cases of either positive group circumstances and negative political ones or vice versa deserve special attention. The notion of the political opportunity structure means dramatic shifts in political sentiments and likely rewards and implies a change in the dominant coalition formation in society with an opening up or closing down of access avenues to potential bidders for power. The opening of the political opportunity structure often takes place, when elite dissent broadens, when political repression is either lowered or gets out of hand, when there are great value shifts in the population or when new electoral alliances form. Sudden, unforeseen events such as sudden death of a political leader and rival play a further role here. Key variables in this rather large set of factors (that often comes in ex post as a deus ex machina in the explanation and telling us that circumstances in the end were simply not favorable for a terrorist group) are elite dissent and the skillful command of repressive forces. Elite dissent usually is the first step to a change in repressive strategies, though sometimes the opposite path emerges: a repressive strategy fails, e.g., with
The weaknesses and failures on the part of terrorist groups stem from basically three factors: first, they miscalculate their own strengths and the resources of their opponents, including their will to fight against the challengers. Second, in doing this, they oversell the violence component in using it undiscriminately against innocent bystanders or lower service personnel thus blundering also the communicative act that usually goes with the use of terrorism. In its more skilled forms, acts of terrorism are not simply to scare the addressees, the immediate victims, supporters and bystanders (and own undercommitted members) and to show the power of terrorist insurgents, but also to communicate the goals of the group, winning support from the broader public and from key groups in addressing hated villains and persistent problems.

The third grave miscalculation stems from misjudging the political opportunity structure. Such a misjudgment is often a direct consequence of failure in the first realm. The doctrine of the RAF that the state in repressive over-reaction would show its "fascist" face to the masses who then were deserting to the rebels is a classic example of both failures. On top of that go virtually illegitimate ideological statements as becomes clear from analyses not only of their prison papers (Baeyer-Katte et al. 1982), but from the ideological drifting further away from reality, right on from their early documents. Workers in Germany wanted to defend their economic and political gains rather than be "liberated" to something not understandable, highly risky, and most unlikely to happen. Fortunately, the state had avoided the trap of over-reaction Fromkin (1975) had referred to. We believe that to be the crucial card in the hands of incumbents and a public not succumbing to panic reactions. Our sorting and ordering of the three key definitional criteria gives the element of state reaction the crucial shibboleth status.

Unless oriented at the goals and interests of larger groups, terrorist groups will only produce private goods for themselves and no public goods. Rather they produce public bads (see Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). There are four basic possibilities of how terrorist groups can be linked to social movements and political parties: (1) terrorist groups operate independently (as some of the Kurdish terrorist groups claim to do), or they come into being at different times. (2) They are part of a broader social movement (as, e.g., in Northern Ireland) following a division of labor that might even include political parties, as the Sinn Fein or Herri Batasuna in the Basque territories. (3) A group starts as a terrorist one and later merges into something...
larger. This is the typical pattern followed by many successful liberation movements, the crucial question being whether an early, middle or late substitution works alike here. The last case (4) occurs when a larger movement leads to a splintering of extremist groups, such as with the RAF movement emerging from the student revolt and anti-Vietnam movement in Germany, with similar examples in France (Action Direct), Italy (Brigate Rosse), and elsewhere. There is also a splintering from other terrorist as, e.g., with the real IRA. In both cases, a radicalization process occurs. A reversal requires a laying down of arms and renouncing terrorism as a political strategy. Again, this in the end was the case with the Brigate Rosse, later on the German Red Army Fraction, and nowadays the IRA.

What is the selectorate for terrorist groups? It appears as if there is none in the initial phase when a terrorist group is forming. Selectorates, i.e. “the set of people with a say in choosing leaders and with a prospect of gaining access to special privileges doled out by leaders” (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003: xi), come into play when they have to choose between different forms of terrorist groups. The recent electoral support for the Hamas rather than for the Fatah is a good example: Hamas was chosen because it is perceived to provide more public goods (safety and fighting spirit in the defense against Israeli attacks) and many other goods as well, such as schooling and social services. If terrorist cells are to outlive their rivals and to address the hearts of the people they have to be aware of this double-demand, providing public goods of safety, protection and order where they are lacking and, secondly, individual goods as well, including positions of (sub-)leadership for skilled talents. In that combination they are almost unbeatable, unless rivals appear who provide these services with lower costs altogether.

There are many other elements as to the strategy and tactics of terrorist groups and organizations than those touched upon thus far, such as issue presentation, coalition formation and addressing the public. Most notable is the discrepancy between strong attacking forces at singular points (the most important tactical issue) and waiting for the right strategical situation through inadequate responses of their (initially) stronger opponents. Both elements, that of grave numerical tactical superiority in attacking and inferiority in being prosecuted (up to figures of 1:20 and beyond) were already addressed in the definitional section II.

The causal model in Figure 4 helps avoids the pitfalls of structural determinism. Waldmann (2005) argues that “subjective” factors, such as personal crises, blocked career patterns, status problems, generational conflicts and affinity to ideological thinking, are more important for recruitment into terrorist groups than “objective” structural conditions such as poverty and injustice. His position can, however, be reconciled with more restrained structure-based explanations. Structures are the supply-factors just as are organizational resources. Individual responses can be considered demand-factors (cf. Frey 2004). Structural factors are only necessary factors. They do not guarantee the occurrence of terrorist acts. There are many more impoverished people in the world questioning the legitimacy of their system, having organizational means and still abstaining from terrorist acts. "The link between socio-political and economic structural factors, such as poverty, lack of economic opportunity, etc. and terrorism is weak" (Gupta 2005:16; Reinares 2005:119).

A famous line in this context reads: “All Muslims are terrorists,” which, obviously, is not true (according to survey data a majority of more than two-thirds is sceptical as
to Islamist terrorism). The reverse, however, comes nearer to the truth, namely that all or nearly all terrorists at this moment are Muslims.

Even if we can provide necessary causal factors such as grievances, terrorist organizational resources, global and national challenges etc., they still are not sufficient for an explanation, given the fact that many more individuals are affected by the very same factors and not turning into terrorists. Social isolation to some extent (e.g., in recruitment to the RAF) is a factor, but again less so in the Muslimic suicide context. Here organizational factors and those of communal and familial socialization play a role. In effect, most authors agree that suicide terrorism is not a phenomenon to be explained at the individual level, but rather an organizational tactic in bidding for power (Berman and Laitin 2007).

At other moments, numerous other factors may be sufficient for a terrorist act, going from revenge to reward and fame (Richardson 2006). Thus, we end up having quite a few sufficient circumstances explaining terrorist acts, and a handful of (necessary?) factors considered underlying (“root”) causes. Given the overall still relatively low number of terrorist acts, those compositional errors and limits to a structure-based analytical assessment will constrain the search for a limited set of necessary factors. Thus, an increase in prediction due to a few necessary and regularly recurring factors will be unlikely. The random elements in many acts of terror will always buffer the shopping list of factors where and for what purposes terrorism occurs. To avoid sampling on the dependent variable, we need to know more about the terrorists’ calculation of opportunity costs (Frey 2004) and also about the impact of organizational rivalry, a key variable in this context.

Several dimensions are relevant here: one is the separation between state and the churches which provides for greater chances of embedding dissent, preventing it from spreading into the public sphere. In short, religious education may de-pacify quite a few anti-statist sentiments. Where such a separation does not exist, however, religion can become an overarching force. The subsequent table illustrates the possibilities:

\[\begin{array}{|c|c|}
\hline
\text{Religion} & \\
\hline
\text{identical} & \text{different} \\
\hline
\text{identical} & 1 \\
& \text{RAF, Brigata Rossa} \\
\text{Nationality} & 2 \\
& \text{terrorism between Shiites and Sunnis in Iraq} \\
\text{different} & 3 \\
& \text{ETA terrorism} \\
& 4 \\
& \text{terrorism against “coalition forces” in Iraq} \\
\hline
\end{array}\]

Table 4: The Double Burden of Differences in Nationhood and Religious Creed

25
Our formal four-level model much more enriches the substantial understanding than a simple economic rational choice model of marginal costs and benefits (Frey 2004) does. It also can be linked to mainstream theorizing in social movement research. An even more elaborated model has to distinguish between factors causing terrorism and those sustaining it (Bjørgo 2005a, 258-60). Among these feedback factors are:

1. Inadequate repression – too low, i.e. not controlling terrorism, or too high thus creating additional support for the ranks of terrorists through overly harsh repression. In both cases, the inadequate level of repression implies underprotection of neutral citizens and that the camp of bystanders is affected.

2. Corrupt and immoral behavior through government officials.

3. Inadequate economic policies, in particular with respect to the group for which the terrorists claim to speak


V. Theories Offered and to be Tested

In putting the emphasis on the development of a general causal model we have thus far refrained from mentioning more substantial explanations. Here is a list of theories that have led to promising results in protest and conflict research in general, as well as in research on right-wing extremism and other phenomena:

Individual theories (level 1)

The oldest underlying general theory is the frustration-aggression theory, even if modified through the intervening variable "anger". Contrary to simplified thinking, anger does not automatically lead to aggression. Constraints are taken into consideration, before an aggression occurs. At the macro level, Richardson (2006) does the same in calling certain structural features variables that increase the risk of terrorism to occur.

Economic misery, poverty, as such is not a cause of terrorism. "Political violence is most likely in societies characterized by rapid modernization, social, and political change, and a significant increase in the proportional size of the young male population" (Gurr 2005:1).

Nor does the "riffraff theory" (badly educated, unskilled, unemployed, criminal young men) hold. "External blame" or "system blame", however, is a strong movens, as suggested, explicitly and implicitly, in many theories, one of the more prominent theories being Rotter's theory of social control ("internal" vs. "external"). An internal locus of control implies that one feels able to control the outcomes of one’s behavior and is not subject to external incalculable events. The key point is that Rotter's feeling's of external control must be incorporated into some blaming and mobilizing mechanisms.
Alienation theories (social isolation, powerlessness, states of anomie) describe similar phenomena using a more Durkheimian anomic perspective. Altogether, the search for a single profile of a "terrorist" will remain futile. On the other hand, there is only extremely rarely terrorism in well-doing and well-integrated communities, and only rarely by even such individuals.

**Sociopsychological theories (which imply a link to level 2)**

First, there is the blocked-opportunity theory (high aspirations of individuals coupled with external blame). Terrorists or their leaders are said to perceive discriminations which hinder them to realize their goals. This theory describes similar constellations as previous ones but does so in more socio-structural terms.

Political efficacy coupled with political distrust is a similar idea, widely tested in survey research. If no other channels of success are envisioned, terror would be a last-resort explanation. Yet, this is often not true given the role of organizations and organizational rivalry which explain the turning on and off of terrorist suicide waves (cf. 2007 Perspectives on Politics, a review symposium on "Understanding Suicide Terror").

Second, status inconsistency theory with the discrepancies between achieved ranks (education, skills) vs. ascribed ones (lower religious, cultural, ethnic status; discriminations, etc.) is another serious candidate for explaining motivation to turn into a terrorist. Yet, this prominent idea is never made fully explicit (cf. Zimmermann 1985). Such status inconsistencies are said to cause particular stress and pain and to call for an outlet.

Third, economic decline in personal circumstances, coupled with increased national inequality and corrupt political leadership, provides another set of ideas, in particular if coupled with the theory of relative deprivation. Relative deprivation provides a more general theoretical framework for the blocked opportunity theory as well as for the explanatory variable, political efficacy x political distrust. Relative deprivation can result from numerous referent points: the own past, present and future; that of other groups, and combinations of the two. The situation in Palestine is full of such elements. There are further theories of social comparison, yet none appears as powerful as the theory of relative deprivation.

**Meso-level / organizational theories (level 2)**

Most prominent here is the resource mobilization theory, a rational choice based theory that has superseded many of the naive predictions of relative deprivation theorizing (Zimmermann 1998). Here the central foci are competition of leaders for resources, provision of leadership and means as well as legitimacy to their followers, while at the same time pursuing their own career patterns. "Militant and terrorist movements draw support from disadvantaged or marginalized groups, though group leaders and activists are rarely marginalized themselves" (Gurr 2005:1).

Bjørøgø observes that 'the presence of charismatic ideological leaders able to transform widespread grievances and frustrations into a political agenda for violent
struggle is a decisive factor behind the emergence of a terrorist movement” (Gurr 2005:2). Yet, there is no unitary picture: "The Turkish diaspora in Europe includes both Kurdish nationalists and Islamist revolutionaries. The Hamas movement and its supporters in the Palestinian diaspora have social and political objectives but use Islamist justifications. Al Qaeda is a rare example of a transnational quasi-religious group, one for which terrorism is the primary strategy in an essentially political struggle against an international enemy and local Muslim governments perceived as alienated from their people" (Gurr 2005:3).

A firm ideology prevents proselytizing by other groups and shifts the cost/reward ratio outwards implying greater sacrifices for the group's cause. When dealing with "economic causes of terrorism", incentives and constraints are at the heart of the analysis. Here the recent argument of Frey and Luechinger (2003) – of increasing, by economic means, the action alternatives of terrorists thus creating more opportunity costs for potential terrorists and therefore raising the overall costs for acts of terrorism – does not seem to work under conditions of Islam. More decentralized measures, as implied by the analysis and recipe of Frey and Luechinger, do not work under current Islamic regimes, at least the Arab ones. In terms of Coleman's (1990:72-81) analysis, the conditions for a disjoint authority relation (where an individual would be extrinsically compensated for what he or she would otherwise not do) are hardly met. There are too many avenues and mechanisms currently exerting pressure to produce affine agents for the predominant and religiously closed world of Islam. Breaking out of these social structures to change the cost and reward-structure, or more to the point: the value structure, is a long-term affair, if at all.

Whereas (Islamic) conjoint authority excludes or strongly reduces free riding, outside economic offers under disjoint authority will rather invite it. Couple this argument with the macro-assessment in the theory of Deutsch (below) and you get a very negative assessment both on the micro and the macro level of analysis. Richardson (2006: chap. 8) might be too optimistic here as to keeping communication channels open for outside incentives.

Most striking perhaps is the pivotal role of religious ideology in explaining suicide terrorism where three explanations rival each other: the first one, religious fanaticism as the cause, is to be ruled out as a singular explanation. There are many more fanatics and terrorists, and suicide terrorism has also been used by Christians and agnostic groups as well as secular Muslim groups. The Tamil tigers as a secular terrorist group have used suicide terrorism to a larger degree than any other group.

The second explanation proposed, e.g., by Pape (2005) focuses more on the role of public good provision under circumstances of suicide attacks. "Pape identifies three ways that religious difference facilitates organizations seeking to run suicide terror campaigns: a) it makes the conflict zero-sum, as resources go either to one side or the other; b) the strange rituals of any religion make it easy for radicals to demonize occupiers; and c) with religion, it is easiest to manipulate the language of martyrdom, which is primarily a religious idea, and 'religious difference is in itself a common standard for martyrdom'" (Berman and Laitin 2007:126).

The third explanation, the club argument, claims specific strength. "Commitment mechanisms give clubs an advantage in any group activity that is sensitive to defection – and suicide attacks are tactic particular sensitive to defection. Perhaps counterintuitively, the link between effective violence and religion is through the
organization advantages that sects provide, rather than through theology" (Berman and Laitin 2007:126). Within their context of their own explanation, Berman and Laitin claim that "suicide attacks are best understood as a tactical evolution in an 'ecological theory of rebellion'" (Berman and Laitin 2007:122).

Pape (2005) "sees benign activity such as social service provision as an instrument aimed at building social approval for the sacrifices of the suicide attackers. The club model, in contrast, use the benign activity as an essential component of a club structure, which is common both to nonviolent and violent radical religious communities. While violence is uncommon among religious sects, their structure allows the option off defection-proof violence" (Berman and Laitin 2007:126). "Organization theories, which focus on the challenge of avoiding defection, provide more promise than theories based on members dispositions in explaining which organizations succeed in carrying out suicide attacks, given rebellion under conditions that disfavor insurgency" (Berman and Laitin 2007:126).

At any rate, suicide terrorism, while using a specific weapon, is not a specific type of terrorism in the sense delineated in Table 1. Suicide terrorism is, however, an example for an extremely effective principal-agent relationship.

Macro theories at the state/societal level (level 3)

The general explanans are crises as structural changes producing decisional challenges and moments of great uncertainty. Six major theoretical explanations can be detected:

First, according to Olson (1965) and many others, rapid economic growth produces increasing inequality and, one may add, often corruption.

Second, as Huntington (1968) vigorously pointed out, the path to modernity is plastered with crises, the most important ones concerning the lack of adequate institutionalization meaning the existence and adaptive capacity of a differentiated party system. Kornhauser (1960) put more emphasis on socio-structural breakdowns of intermediate structures in his theory of the mass society.

Third, there are state crises, sometimes even leading to state failure.

Fourth and broadly corroborated, semi-repressive regimes, which occur ad mid-levels of economic development coupled with great socio-economic inequality, are a particular efficient and permanent incentive for protest, internal war (Muller and Weede 1990) and terrorism. This has to do with their erratic repressive qualities and illegitimate rule. The consequences of all this have been succinctly put by Huntington (1968) four decades in his theory of praetorian politics where the military engages in coups, the priests turn into politicians, the students riot, the wealthy bribe, and, one may add, mostly young males at some levels of education in densely populated areas with low employment prospects are recruited into terrorism.

Fifth, the perhaps major insight from macro-sociology is found in the theory of social mobilization according to Karl Deutsch (1966). He distinguishes between culturally (ethnically, religiously, language-wise etc.) homogenous cultures and those that are heterogenous before the onset of modernization (urbanization, migration,
alphabetization, use of mass media, education, political participation). In the homogeneous instance, the means of modernization are used as to bring about more societal integration and a functional division of labor. In the heterogeneous case, however, the very same processes occur, only that integration now only refers to the respective subgroups. They become more modern, but often also more antagonistic to other groups.

There are three basic reasons for this: one is cultural subgroup-leaders who profit from such a strategy in terms of political and economic power. The other is, that the own cultural kin can provide public goods such as order and education (Hechter and Okamotu 2001) whereas the dominant state often does not, being captured by other groups. The third factor is, following the experiments of Tajfel (1981), the almost inborn-need of forming in-groups and out-groups.

The essence is that you get more trouble the more modern metropolitan areas become, unless you have over-arching mechanisms of political, economic, and cultural representation. The European Union here repeats on a super-national level what occurs to some extent in each of the great Western metropoles, i.e. treating each group on the base of equal rights and thus creating strong ties that bridge ethno-cultural division lines.

This leads immedialy to the second important theorizing, the theory of status inconsistency already mentioned, but here directly connected to the insights of Deutsch. Status inconsistency theory claims that receiving differential rewards to higher or lower partial ranks than status consistents receive creates status inconsistent feelings. Such as stress would lead to (radical) reactions as a "solution." Though the theory is marred with numerous theoretical and methodological pitfalls (see Zimmermann 1985 for an overview), one point, however, is absolutely vital: if there is a discrepancy between high achieved status (like a university degree) and low ascribed status (such as a low ethno-cultural standing) leading to occupational discrimination you might expect a leadership potential to arrive that at some point could mobilize the other less successful individuals of a subgroup against the dominant society. Usually, western open societies coopt most of these leaders (cf. the successful black middle class in the U.S.) thus introducing social change with new personal and ideas, while at the same time weakening potential protesters in taking away their leaders. With such mechanisms multiplying at times of greater insecurities of permanent positions, nearly everywhere under the impact of globalization, one has to reckon with many more such status inconsistent leaders (see Zimmermann 1980 already with respect to German cities). In addition, academics from the dominant culture under specific conditions might be tempted to bring in their talents and means of access in mobilizing cross-ethnic anti-system protest.

The two theories of heterogeneous ethno-cultural mobization ----> more conflicts as a macro theory and the theory of status inconsistency in the present form (individuals to group level perspective) are addressing the same problem areas from a different perspective.

Sixth, one must add the already mentioned youth bulge that is uncontrollable (Heinsohn 2003) and occurs in regions lacking a regional control center (Huntington 1996).
Global level (level 4)

The same basic idea from the national level of analysis reoccurs with even more force: globalization produces social and economic uprooting, increased inequality and less security for many groups. Globalization implies an increasing lack in the state's power to grant this security to its citizens facing these challenges. Fact is, however, that, at the macro level, states and societies that open up to globalization, while at the same time carefully protecting to some extent and fostering their own resources (Rodrick), profit dramatically from this increased division of labor. Almost four hundred million people have escaped from the poverty level in India and China (Dollar and Kraay 2002, Xavier-i-Martin 2002, in the last thirty years). Also the relative size of the state has not much changed over the last thirty years, contrary to recent claims for privatization of many services.

Globalization thus may create cultural resistance. It fosters the development of new minorities, the globalization losers. It creates increased opportunities for militant and terrorist groups and allows linkages between political and criminal networks. It multiplies the number of culprits, the number of objects to be attacked and the knowledge (media, diffusion, etc.) in carrying out those attacks, apart from weakening the state in classical domains (all features according to Gurr 2005:3-4). Thus, globalization multiplies the number of culprits, the number of objects to be attacked and the knowledge (media, diffusion, etc.) in carrying out those attacks through rapid transportation, communication, news media, and weapons.

VI. A Few Scenarios

Most terrorist groups probably still cherish highly the notion of over-reaction of the state. Under-reaction of the state authorities is also of help to them in that a state and society gradually can give up themselves, as the fate of the Weimar Republic and other democracies in interwar Europe and elsewhere demonstrates. Bin Laden and his followers quite likely might favor the strong (over)reaction of the U.S. as a more longterm favorable strategy to their goals. Excessive features of that like the abuse of repression in Abu Greib and Guantanamo prove this point, irrespective of the massive pressure put on the original leadership of al Qaeda, several times escaping heavy attacks from the U.S. Their leaders could have not survived without the basic sympathy of warlords in Waziristan and many other supporters.

On the other hand, an under-reaction in partly withdrawing from the Arab territories and making more than symbolic gestures would not have worked either. Also in a double-strategy in pursuing both, repression and retaliation as well as exploring means of conciliation, terrorists most likely would see only signs of weakness. Once the struggle is phrased in terms of Satan or crusade of good against evil on both sides, most likely there is only room for harsh reactions, if not over-reaction, on both sides.

Depending on the outcome of the longterm fight against al Qaeda, the U.S. strategy at best has prevented further attacks in the U.S., and, apart from Madrid and London, in Europe. Yet, no place is safe from such attacks. Whether democratic nation-
building in Afghanistan and Iraq will be a long-term success remains highly questionable, given the lack of requirements for such a success, namely, political freedom, order, emancipation of women, independent secular political and economic domains, in short civil pluralist society in its many faces (Linz and Stepan 1996:7-15). The Western world simply represents an ideal object of attack for al Qaeda and others engaging in proxy warfare. The U.S. in particular, but other European states as well (though considerably less), are intertwined in their interests with Arab oil magnates. The socio-economic development for the masses at large has declined in most Muslim states over the last two decades, excepting only the small Arab emirates, Indonesia and Turkey (a culturally, geographically and politically much different story). Thus, there are two ideal objects of attack at the same time: not only the West but also incumbent political elites perceived as corrupt, who would be driven out of office were it not for the support and presence of the U.S. and, though less, European powers. Take the division between the Shiite community, now apparently winning the ongoing civil war in Iraq and having many adherents in Iran, Syria and elsewhere, and the formerly dominant Sunnis and you get the lines of further political earthquakes. The need of Western societies for Arab oil makes for a longterm issue of “colonial exploitation” here, coupled with the Muslim view of a lost crusade throughout the last five hundred years. The Balkan Kosovo control strategy of European powers and forces for securing political order is simply ruled out in the Arab world, for reasons of distance, numbers, political and cultural history, and memory.

The only way to stop this explosive set of conditions in the Arabic world (Black Africa and elsewhere), is a social and political control of the extremists from the inside, through a growing power of the moderates. Analysts like Huntington (1996) and Heinsohn (2003) are, however, much more sceptical pointing to the youth bulge of fifty percent of the population, being under fifteen years old, and unemployed with a likelihood up to eighty per cent in some states, which makes ordinary rule impossible and provides for easy recruitment into terrorist groups.

Thus, for a long time the externalization of internal conflicts just as much as the internalization of external conflicts (for further externalization of internal conflict items) will remain a permanent issue in that region. Perhaps an even stronger force, however, is arising on the horizon, with the challenges of globalization through the economic and increasingly political success of China, and now India. The latter, in two respects, is of further importance: India is a democracy demonstrating that open economic and political development is possible and it has a Muslim population close to 200 million very soon. In short, India much more than China could demonstrate that multi-culturalism and democracy and massive economic growth are possible under appropriate economic policies.

On the other hand, Deutsch would warn against over-optimism, in that conflicts in a heterogenous society become enlarged once social mobilization and modernization are setting in. Deutsch’s prediction (cf. Hibbs 1973) would make for scepticism also in Turkey, Iran, and elsewhere. The mediating influence of the European Union in Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Baltic States and perhaps even the Middle East and parts of Africa, however, is a strong counter-factor, as is the unparalleled economic challenge coming from increased globalization. Such a massive challenge most unlikely would go on for long without any more adequate (from a Westen point of view) response. Turmoil, revolt, and revolutionary times, at least dramatic change, might occur in a much shorter phase of adaptation. There is no room for another more than five hundred years of missing periods of worldwide change – such as the
renaissance, enlightenment and European revolutions in the route of relative decline of
the Muslim world from its dominance in the second half of the 15th century till its
backward role today. Blocked political, economic and social modernization is the
result nearly everywhere in the Arab world.

Just as much as Russia does not face enviable alternatives in the future, given the
massive rise of China, the Chinese immigration to Russia’s eastern territories, the loss
of resourceful Southern client states and the lack of an established democracy (Russia
suffers from over-extension, population decline and competitors perceived as enemies
all along its borders), the Arab Muslim world is in a similar situation (with the sole
exception in the South where state failure dominates). The common ground is natural
resources which, in the end, make for political rent-seeking and rentier states (Ross
2001). The rise of the trading state under conditions of globalization (Rosecrance
2006) is the challenge and yardstick to live up to.

An even wilder scenario emerges if the economic challenges of China and India in
about fifty years, given current growth rates etc. (this is just one scenario!), are to be
countered not only by the combined weight of the U.S., Europe including Russia and
Japan. Here even the Muslim world could turn out as an additional partner aboard (cf.
Huntington 1996 for further geopolitical scenarios and speculations).

One should be aware how strong the functional requirements of modernity are (cf.
Szirmai 2005): family sizes everywhere drop eventually, women receive full education
and share adequately in the job market and in society, goods are bought from and
sold to everywhere. The universal media presence will allow people to find out what is
best for them.

In the immediate next decades, Heinsohn (2003) and Huntington (1996) could be
right with their prediction: a violent youth bulge and terrorist fighting have to run out
entirely before a new political order, internally and externally, could be built. The
spillover of that structural terrorism into the Western world could be on a much more
gigantic scale than at any time before.

VII. CONCLUSION

This list of potentially fruitful theoretical candidates in itself shows how limited the
intellectual "beauty" contest in research on terrorism has been so far. In theoretical
terms, less that five percent of what is published is of much explanatory use, from a
broad comparative point of view. Narrative, often speculative-sensational accounts
predominate just as do grand scenarios, histories of specific terrorist groups, or
practical questions of technical responses. There is only limited data for in-depth
multivariate analyses. Section V also demonstrates how limited the assessment of
already limited data is in the field of political terrorism. It is the mild hope of the
present contribution to correct these efforts and theoretical deficits, at least to some
extent.

To name only a handful of promising candidates for fruitful theoretical research and,
at the same time, domains where to expect more terrorist conflicts: First, there is
anti-"colonial" nationalism in the broadest sense and as the most general
denominator for protest coalitions. Anti-colonialism, or in some respects more
precisely: anti-neocolonialism is the driving force behind persistent violent conflict, including widespread terrorism.

Second, (2) the religious momentum is to be diagnosed in several respects. One is creating dissent amongst and with other religions and religious branches. A second one is bridging the private and political sphere. A third one, in the Islamist case, implies the greatest obstacles for a dissociation of religion from politics and thus a further institutional differentiation of both, religion and state. A fourth and very general one comes with the religious promises, i.e. creating a shift in costs taken and thus producing more resources for dissent and terror.

Third, the theory of social mobilization at the macro level (Deutsch 1966), coupled with increased feelings of sometimes absolute, but more often relative deprivation and status inconsistency, provides one of the strongest predictors as to the effects of modernization (and democratization). A heterogeneous population setup of the pre-modern population, in the process of modernization, most likely will lead to (more) violent and terrorist conflict. This hold inspite that the means of modernization and social mobilization originally should mean more resources to share and to distribute. The point simply is, as with anti-colonial issues, that ethno-cultural matters for many seem to be indivisible issues. What is the case with homogeneous populations under the modernization impact, namely within-group integration, repeats itself for each ethno-cultural sub-group, with between-groups differentials not vanishing. Thus, social mobilization of ethno-cultural pluralist societies normally will not lead to integration but rather to cleavages and claims for autonomy in whatever form (Hibbs 1973).

If respective numbers of persons indeed feel as delineated groups (Hechter and Okamoto 2001) and if a long history of sufferance of such a minority exists (also majorities can make such experiences, cf. the Hutu in Ruanda and Burundi), one has to reckon with a big conflict potential.

This negative experience of the past and present throws a shadow onto the future, not only through transmitted historical experiences and “myths,” but also through everyday-life socialization patterns in conflict situations. Typically families and other networks such as religious schools are the strongest recruitment factors for violent ethno-cultural clashes.

Even more succinct is the argument of Lake and Rothchild (1996): minorities are afraid that, for reasons of structural asymmetry, they will always be the victims of state authorities. Game theory calls this private information state authorities possess and could use. This knowledge is, however, not accessible to minority leaders who are willing to go for a compromise. The conflicts and clashes from Northern Ireland via the Balkans and Turkey to Palestine provide vivid examples.

Fourth, and perhaps the keyholder, is the dynamic and sometimes not dynamic enough role of two crucial elements: one, the dynamic part, is the flexible role of organizations in hammering out and switching on and off (new) tactics and strategies. The other one lies in the paralyzing role and insufficient control of the Islamic clergy and its political philosophy.

Is culture, organizational outbidding, institutional deficiencies the crucial element, or how specifically are the interactions between these numerous variables addressed? A
single positive case in the world of Islamist terrorism leading out of the virulence of terror at the levels one through three, would provide enormous insight here.

In the absence of an international monopoly of power, in particular one widely perceived as legitimate, in the absence of redressing the impact of colonial conquest and destruction of native institutions, in the absence of religious compromise links between the major monotheistic religions, the viability of creating democratic states in the Arab world, for one, looks extremely limited. Take Abu Graif with its lasting iconic image, take the backing of oil oligarchies by the West, of oligarchies not accepted in their own countries, consider the memories of deep violations of the state monopoly of power and make your balance sheet of how easy the imposition of democracy is in a region not providing the basic qualities for democracy, namely the distinction and clear differentiation between worldly and ulterior domains. It took the West a thousand years to achieve that, with reformation and enlightenment and social and political revolutions in between. Perhaps a tenth of that time-span in the Arab world would be considered a miracle. Whoever may have coined the phrase, its warning will be with us for a longtime: “Better the devil we know than the devil we don’t.”¹

¹ To be added: stylized facts: stocktaking of major empirical findings and references (one-line comments), responses to terrorism (game theory, portion to be added by Friedrich Schneider), more on future scenarios, etc.
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